

The

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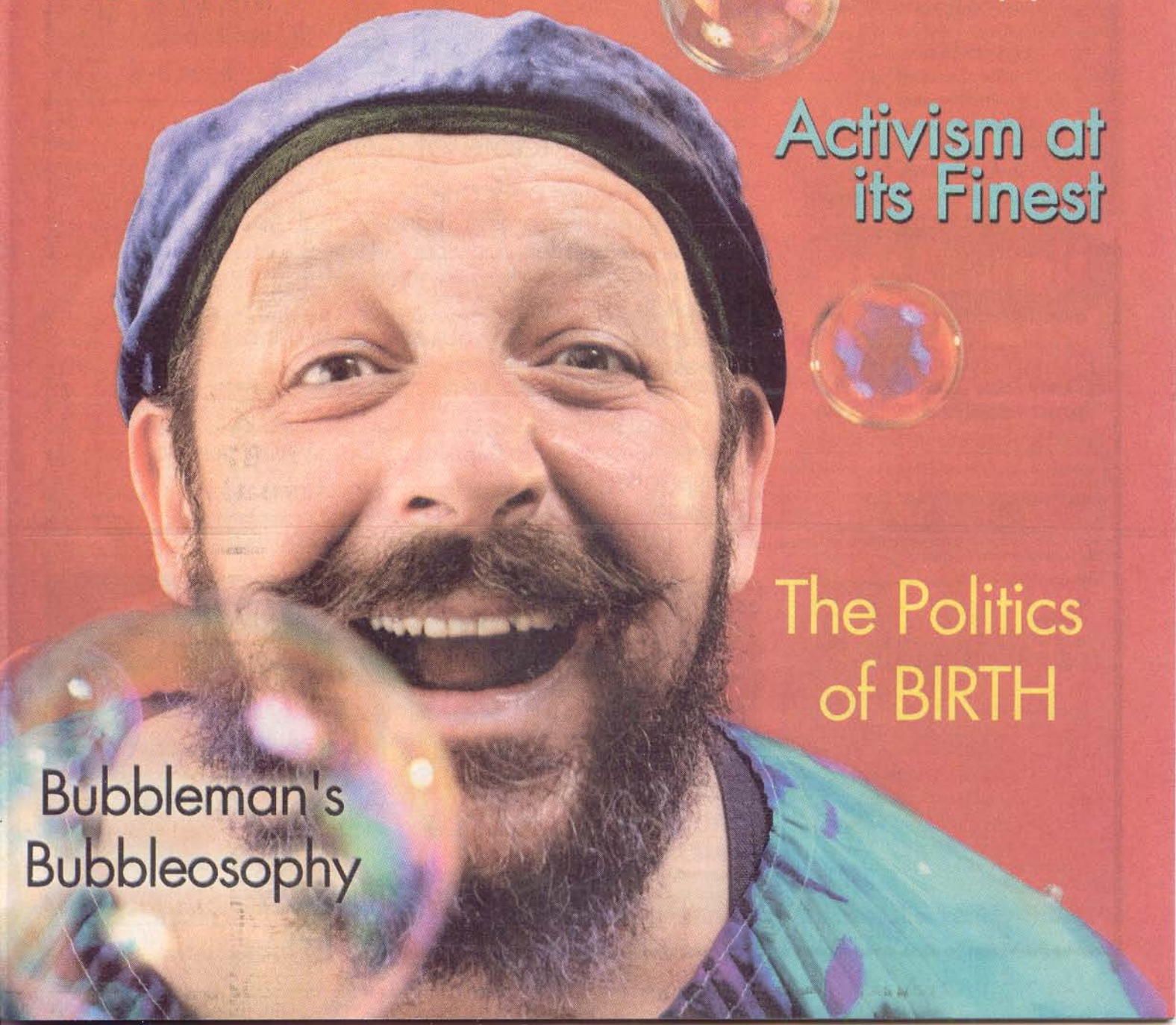
Mercury in
our Teeth?!

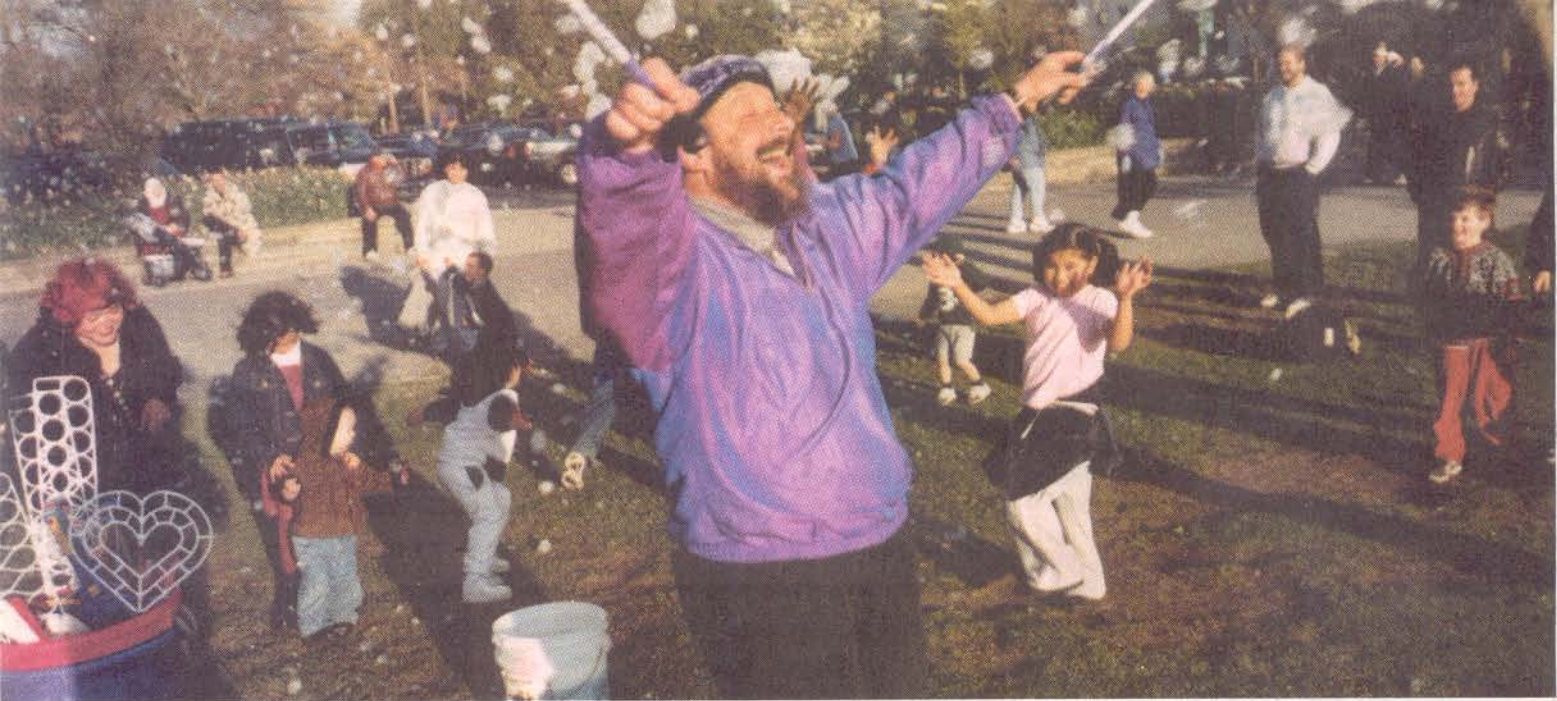
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Life is Like a Bubble

By Kelley Guiney

Among Seattle's many unique attractions, there is one that stands out as particularly original. If you've ever walked around Greenlake and come upon a man with a bucket of soap blowing the biggest bubbles you've ever seen into the air as a crowd of children run after them, you've stumbled onto one of the world's finest street performers and committed "active pacifists," Seattle's Garry Golightly, A.K.A. Bubbleman.

Golightly has traveled the world with his joyful, uplifting and subtly socially con-

scious performance, gracing the globe from Japan to Poland in his mission to, as he puts it, "go where there's misery and bring joy, even if it's only lemon fresh." He's a modern day pied piper, and upon leaving his house can usually be found surrounded by a swarm of children, with amused parents looking on.

The Bubbleman's career in his eye-catching purple van (covered with painted bubbles) began after a series of adventures, first as an art teacher, then as a breath therapist in Sweden followed by taking part in a series of peace walks throughout the country in the 1980s. Taking a break in Gainesville, Florida, Golightly purchased a bubble maker and decided to entertain local commuters. "Everyone was going home from work," he explains, "They looked so sad, and I wanted to do something to cheer them up. Well, traffic stopped all the way around the pond watching me bounce these giant bubbles on the water. And a guy called me over to his car and said, Hey, do you do weddings?" I said, "I do now." One offer led to another, and Golightly made the front page of the local paper. Days later he received an offer to go to Tokyo to blow bubbles for ten days.

"Well, you're making people happy,
and that's why I raised you."

—Bubbleman's Mom

Thus a career was born.

The Bubbleman's great love is working with children, and he has received invitations to perform throughout the world. His appeal seems to know no bounds. In the early 1990s he took a break from touring Poland's orphanages to enter an international street fair performers competition in London, where he won first place. In February of this year he was asked to perform in Poland at a series of children's villages, set up for children who will

The Bubbleosophy

People are just like bubbles.
We are all different shapes, colours & sizes,
just like bubbles
and some of us last longer than others,
just like bubbles...
But we all come from the same Source,
just like bubbles.
All bubbles come from joy.
All people come from Love,
because only Love exists.
When we don't know we come from Love,
we fall in Love.
When we realize we come from Love,
we rise in Love,
just like bubbles.

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never be adopted. These villages are located all over the world, and it is Golightly's dream to find a sponsor and travel to all of them.

When he's not trotting the globe, Golightly makes his home in Seattle, where he performs at birthday parties, weddings, and even funerals. Golightly's performance showcases his obvious love for children and his never-ending creativity. His inventive bubble makers are introduced one by one. Carpet beaters from Hungary and Russia, fly swatters from France, plastic silverware trays from the thrift store, tennis rackets, plastic six-pack soda can holders (160 of them sewn together), all of these items have been turned into unique bubble making machines. By the middle of the show children understand what they are – "What is this?" Golightly will ask, to be met by a shrieking chorus of "A cheap toy!"

As the children run after bubbles and listen with rapt attention, Golightly keeps up a running dialogue with parents as well, encouraging with subtlety and humor a shift from consumerism to good old fashion play, encouraging environmental awareness and health. "Breathe through your nose and hospitals will close," is one of his common admonishments, as the children all take a deep breath. The show winds down with a beautiful moment where Golightly encourages calm by unveiling the megabubbleopolis, a magic wand that has a small bubble trapped inside. The now enchanted children are invited to quietly examine the wand and try to help Golightly free the trapped bubble. In this calm state the children are instructed to wrap their arms around themselves and chant the magic words "I am huggabubble. I am adorabubble. I am incredibubble. I am lovabubble. I am very beautifububble."

Last year Golightly was honored by local songwriter Dwight Beckmeyer, who penned the song "God Bless the Bubbleman." The song was performed by the Seattle Girls Choir at the prestigious Benaroya hall, and Golightly was invited up on stage to blow bubbles during the tribute:

*Bringing windows of wonder and love
through the land / with his handlebar mustache
and his purple blue van / blowing magical
bubbles that float to the sky / bringing laughter
to children and a tear to my eye*

The life's work of the Bubbleman was summed up poignantly by his mother, who became seriously ill (she later recovered) just after her son's career was getting started. While visiting her in the hospital he explained the new vocation he had found. She commented, "Well, you're making people happy, and that's why I raised you."

Garry Golightly can be reached at 206-781-6749 or at www.bubbleman.com.